

IN THE CLAIMS

Please add new claims 22-24 as follows:

DI 22. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the positions of pixels in which the bits are placed is decided in accordance with a predetermined procedure irrespective of pixel data.

23. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the positions of pixels in which the bits are placed is predetermined fixed positions irrespective of pixel data.

24. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the positions of pixels in which the bits are placed is a predetermined position.